REMARKS

The Office Action and the references cited therein have been carefully reviewed. The following remarks herein are considered to be responsive thereto.

Claims 2 and 17-20 are cancelled, claims 1 and 3-16 are amended, and clams 21-25 are new. Regarding the peer-to-peer configuration set forth in independent claims 1, 7 and 12, this feature has already been presented in original claims 19 and 20. See also the specification, e.g., page 4, lines 7-10. Regarding receiving information, see the specification, page 8, middle paragraph. Regarding transmitting information, see the specification, page 10, bottom paragraph. Regarding enabling TV viewers to watch what another person is watching, see the specification, e.g., page 3 and 4, carryover paragraph.

Regarding new claims 21, 23 and 25, see the specification, page 8, lines 4-11. Regarding new claims 22 and 24, see the specification, pages 8-9, carryover paragraph. No new matter is entered.

Claims 1, 3-16 and 21-25 are therefore pending.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections for at least the reasons set forth below. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 7 and 12 are patentably distinguished over the cited references and are allowable, and that the dependent claims are allowable at least because they depend from an allowable base claim.

Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiyoshi (JP10-248020-A) in view of Harper et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,537,141). The claims ass amended are believed to clearly distinguish over the cited references. Hiyoshi has been acknowledged in Applicant's specification, pages 2-3, carryover paragraph, where it was noted that:

In Hiyoshi, two TV's are connected together in a master/slave configuration for the purposes of enabling a parent at a master TV to monitor what is being viewed by a child on a slave TV. In operation, the master TV receives the image data being viewed on the slave TV and displays the data on a corner part of the master TV display. However, this setup does nothing to enhance the viewing experience and does not promote a community experience as may be desired by a "connected" household.

Thus, Hiyoshi does not address the problem addressed by the Applicant – namely, that of promoting a community experience by enabling different TV viewers to determine what another person is watching on another TV. Instead, Hiyoshi only teaches that the children's televisions 20A, 20B are configured to become monitors or extensions of the parent's television 10 and thus under the control of the parent's television 10 in a master-slave configuration. *See* page 6/23, paragraph [0004]. To do this, the parent's television 10 has the capability to utilize the children's televisions 20A, 20B as a monitor in addition to having a remote control capability to change the channel on the children's televisions 20A, 20B and to turn off the children's televisions 20A and 20B. *See*, page 11/23, paragraph [0012], page14/23, paragraph [0017]. Therefore, Hiyoshi is limited to a master-slave configuration between television sets, wherein the slave sets within the system serve as monitor extensions of the master set.

Hiyoshi's approach is therefore distinct from Applicant's approach, which provides peer-to-peer communications between processors associated with different television apparatuses to allow a first person who is watching a first television apparatus to obtain information regarding content that a second person is currently viewing on a second television apparatus. Moreover, to achieve the peer-to-peer functionality, the second person can obtain information regarding content that the first person is currently viewing on the first television apparatus. Hiyoshi simply fails to disclose or suggest such functionality.

Moreover, Harper et al. fails to cure the deficiencies of Hiyoshi. Harper provides a distance learning system where a television signal is transmitted from an instructor's location (teacher control unit 100, Figure 1) to a student's location (classroom master unit 170, Figure 1).

In response to test questions provided by the TV signal, the students can provide student response data via keypads 194 (Figure 1, col. 17, line 63 to col. 18, line 2). A telco/data interface 128 at the instructor's location allows the instructor to receive data, such as the responses to the test questions, along with voice signals, from the students. Also at the instructor's location, a monitor 202 (Figure 2) projects evaluation results provided by a host PC 134 (col. 10, lines 5-9). Accordingly, Harper et al. is even less relevant to the present invention because the students are all watching the same TV signal of the instructor on the TV monitor 186 (Figure 1), but the instructor is not watching any TV signal.

Furthermore, Harper et al. is non-analogous to the present invention since it is not in the same field as the invention and is not reasonably pertinent to the problem solved by the invention. In particular, Harper et al. is related to the field of distance learning, where students view a common TV signal, while the invention is concerned with allowing different TV viewers, such as in a household, to determine what the other viewers are watching on respective different television apparatuses. Similarly, Harper et al. is not reasonably pertinent since it provides no information regarding how to provide a system as claimed by Applicant.
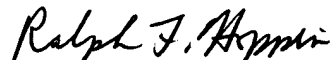
Harper et al. is cited by the Examiner as teaching the use of query information between video television sets and/or computers. However, Harper does not teach the use of query information between television sets since, in the Harper system, there is only one TV monitor 186 that is viewed by students at each classroom master unit 170 (Figure 1). Any query information used by Harper et al. is not for the purpose set forth in Applicants claims for allowing a first person who is watching a first television apparatus to obtain information regarding content that a second person is currently viewing on a second television apparatus, and for allowing the second person to obtain information regarding content that the first person is currently viewing on the first television apparatus. Instead, the Harper et al. system is provided in a completely different context.

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Regarding the one-to-one teacher to student feedback cited by the Examiner, this relates to the fact that recorded audio responses from the instructor are provided as feedback to the students via the TV signal, based on test responses that are provided by the student via keypads and transmitted upstream to the instructor's location via the telco/data interface 128 (col. 4, lines 25-39). This teaching style is not relevant to providing peer-to-peer communications between processors that are associated with television apparatus as set forth in Applicant's claims.

Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicant's attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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